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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6972
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN IMMEDIATE 0573
RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE 8791
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE 6447
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SUBJECT: SUPREME COURT RULING ON ZUMA CASE SPARKS REACTIONS

REF: PRETORIA 47

11. (U) Summary: The South African Supreme Court's January 12 judgment allowing corruption charges against Jacob Zuma to move forward drew various reactions from across the political landscape. African National Congress (ANC) alliance parties expressed their continued support for ANC President Jacob Zuma, with some pro-Zuma voices reviving the notion of a conspiracy against their candidate. Opposition parties welcomed the decision and some questioned Zuma's suitability as a presidential candidate. The ANC itself, as reported reftel, vigorously maintains that nothing has changed and that Zuma will be South Africa's next president. End summary.

The ANC Alliance: Zuma Remains Our Choice

12. (U) The ANC Youth League, following the text of the ANC's statement, has simply taken note of the court decision and has, uncharacteristically, declined further comment. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) also voiced respect for the court but maintained that the decision to prosecute Zuma was politically motivated. Both COSATU and SACP expressed doubt that Zuma will receive a fair trial.

DA and ID Await Zuma's Day in Court

13. (U) Both the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Independent Democrats (ID) urged the National Prosecuting Authority to continue its case against Zuma without delay, adding that Zuma must clear his name. Helen Zille, leader of the DA, said that if Zuma is to honor the ANC platform's pledge to fight against corruption in its ranks, he should renounce his candidacy for president.

Faith in the System Restored ?

14. (U) The Inkatha Freedom Party said the ruling had restored faith in the country's judicial system. The breakaway ANC party, the Congress of the People (COPE), welcoming the ruling, charged that former President Thabo Mbeki had been removed from office for no reason.
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